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30 October 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director/Intelligence

SUBJECT: Staff Study on USAF Over-Flights

PROBLEM

1. The problem is to secure photography from the Directorate of Intelligence, USAF, on recent and projected over-flights of [REDACTED]

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FACTS AND DISCUSSION

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2. On 26 June 1953, this Agency was contacted by the Directorate of Intelligence, USAF, to co-ordinate in the projected over-flight [REDACTED] This was done at a series of conferences with representatives of the Directorate of Intelligence, USAF, and this Agency concurred in the proposed plan. The CIA representatives indicated what camera types, configurations, films and related operations offered the best chance of collecting answers to CIA intelligence requirements. It is believed that this CIA participation improved the intelligence value of the mission. The over-flight was subsequently made and the photography inspected on 1 September 1953 by a representative of ORR. He was informed that a limited number of Top Secret Mission Review Reports Serials 1255 and 1256 were under preparation and that one copy of each was scheduled to be forwarded to CIA Central Top Secret Control in a few days. However, this Agency has never received copies of the photography. On 11 September the representative of the Geographic Research Area, ORR, called the Photo Reconnaissance Branch, AFOIN, to ask about the CIA copies of the same Mission Review Reports and was informed that General Sanford had ordered all copies of these reports, all data sheets and related photography to be put away in the "deep freeze". Another call on 30 October to the same office revealed that there was no change in this situation and that target materials based on the subject photography were being produced from memory only.

Document No. <u>4</u>
No Change in Class. <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Declassified
Class. Character <u>13</u> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <u>0</u>
Next Review Date <u>1990</u>
Auth: <u>HH</u>
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SECURITY INFORMATION

3. The procedures for approval of over-flights are not as yet firm. A precedent was established in the [REDACTED] operation, however, which procedure is in the final stages of approval. In essence, this procedure involves the following steps:

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(a) The establishment of the requirement by the USAF and its co-ordination with the Army and Navy.

(b) Approval, through the Joint Chiefs of Staff, of the Secretary of Defense subject to concurrence by the Department of State and the Central Intelligence Agency.

(c) Final Joint Chiefs of Staff approval.

4. The procedure in Paragraph 3 is in a JIC draft and will be forwarded to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for their approval, subsequent to which the procedure will be firm.

5. The present procedure stems from a decision by the President that he did not wish to be involved in the approval of over-flights, because of the implications of Executive concurrence in the event that any over-flights were intercepted or that operational failure took place. However, it was the President's direction that State Department and CIA co-ordination be obtained. It is the opinion of Colonel Cole, representative of the Deputy for Collection (General Lewis), Directorate of Intelligence, USAF, that, should CIA not co-ordinate on a projected over-flight, that final approval would not be forthcoming from the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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6. A new over-flight [REDACTED] is currently being planned and Colonel Cole has contacted this Agency for its requirements and co-ordination. These requirements and the co-ordination are in process.

7. A further indication of CIA participation in support of over-flights has been evidenced by an approach made by [REDACTED] DD/P, to ascertain Geographic Area capabilities for preparing evasion and escape geographic studies for over-flight areas. It was agreed that such studies could be prepared for Strategic Air Command and that upon further clarification within the Psychological Warfare Division, Air Force, a verbal request may be made to the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence through the Chief of the [REDACTED]

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CONCLUSIONS

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8. In view of the failure to obtain the photography on the [REDACTED] over-flight from the Air Force, it is improbable that future high priority photography of the same nature can be obtained for national intelligence exploitation.

9. Approval for future over-flight missions probably would not be granted by the Joint Chiefs of Staff without the concurrence of this Agency.

10. CIA currently furnishes all CIA over-flight mission photography to the USAF.

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11. There are strong indications that CIA may be called upon by the USAF to furnish escape and evasion studies in support of future over-flights, possibly beginning with [REDACTED] operation.

ACTION RECOMMENDED

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12. It is recommended that the Deputy Director/Intelligence contact the Director of Intelligence, USAF, to obtain the photography of [REDACTED] over-flight and the latter's assurance of copies of future photography. If such co-operation cannot be obtained from the Air Force, it is recommended that this Agency withhold its approval of [REDACTED] over-flight.

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